

Division of the State Architect

Department of General Services

Certified Access Specialist Program Implementation Status Report

May, 2005

Overview

This report describes current activities of the Division of the State Architect (DSA) for implementing the Certified Access Specialist (CAsp) program. It notes program accomplishments and significant events that have occurred since the previous report of January 2005.

DSA project staff are currently concentrating on (1) creating the certification examination, (2) drafting regulations for administering the CAsp program, and (3) scheduling the many interrelated tasks necessary to launch the program.

Legislative Authority

Senate Bill 262 (Chapter 873, Statutes of 2003) authorizes "the State Architect to establish and publicize a program for state certification of access specialists." SB 262 requires that DSA maintain a public list of certified access specialists beginning in October 2005. In December 2003 DSA staff began establishing the CAsp program.

Determining Fundamental Certification Criteria

SB 262 directed the State Architect to convene an "[ad hoc advisory committee](#)" to assist in developing the requirements for certification as access specialists." It further stipulated representation on the committee by specific state agencies, the building industry and by people with disabilities. Beginning in March 2004, DSA hosted five productive meetings of the *Implementation Advisory Committee* for the CAsp program.

DSA staff finished collaboration with this ad hoc advisory committee in December 2004. Resulting recommendations of criteria for certification of access specialists were forwarded to the State Architect and approved. The Implementation Advisory Committee now stands adjourned.

[Comparative Occupational Roles and Performance Domains](#)

[Qualification Requirements of Candidates for Certification](#)

Project Management

As the project approached its midpoint in early 2005 DSA staff investigated primary areas of concern, including

examination development, establishing a training resource, development of regulations, marketing and public relations and operational readiness.

DSA staff developed a comprehensive project schedule that defined major activity groups for these concerns. The resulting schedule revealed two paths of critical tasks: (1) development of the certification examination; and (2) development of regulatory law for the CAsp program.

Examination Development

Initiation of several major activity groups must wait until key milestones are achieved during development of the certification examination. For example, the technical content of training courses may not be finalized before completion of the test specification phase of examination development. After receiving final approval of the contract with Cooperative Personnel Services (CPS), the test development consultant, DSA staff has spent the past month preparing to convene a carefully selected panel of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). CPS will begin by conducting two SME workshops to perform a formal job analysis of the new occupations, setting the groundwork for examination content development. The majority of SME work will occur afterward — writing and validating every examination question.

Establishing a Training Resource

DSA staff charged with implementing the CAsp program has extensive recent experience in conducting full-breadth training in access compliance. They completed several workshops tailored for building officials in late 2004, and can rely on valuable experiences like these in developing training sessions for CAsp candidates. By recognizing the similarities between training for the CAsp program and ongoing requests for customized training to stakeholder groups, such as local building departments, DSA staff will define training modules that serve training needs beyond CAsp. Development of CAsp training will follow closely after completion of the test specification phase.

Development of Regulations

Administrative regulations have to be in place before the CASp program can accept payments from program applicants. DSA staff is in the midst of assembling a complete rulemaking package; rulemaking could be completed by September. Training sessions would begin later that month followed by a certification examination in mid-October.

For more information, please contact:

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Fiscal Analysis

Fiscal analysis for the CASp program is underway, and preliminary projections of revenue are encouraging. Firmer estimates of program costs must wait until related program determinations are made over the coming months.

Marketing and Public Relations

Marketing and public relations efforts have been identified. Senior DSA staff has initiated discussions with key government allies and other stakeholder groups, such as the California Architect's Board and the California Association of Local Building Officials. DSA staff has requested to retain the services of a professional consultant to ensure its marketing approach to both candidates and clients is fundamentally sound. There is growing need for announcements of dates for key events of program launch, such as when to apply, registration for training, and taking the certification examination. DSA staff is creating a draft version of a comprehensive *candidate handbook*.

Program Administration

Information technology staff at DSA is prepared to begin development of the program's information management system (IMS). A substantial part of IMS capabilities will be straightforward adaptations of existing DSA *Tracker* application software. The IMS will administer certification status in three areas: those seeking certification, those currently certified, or those applying for recertification. The IMS will facilitate processes for auditing specialist performance as well as complaint administration. These capabilities require the record keeping of client casework for each specialist. Initial development of the IMS will focus on administration of candidate qualifications for certification — especially as used for training course registration.

California Certified Access Specialist Program
 Comparative Occupational Roles and Performance Domains
 June 8, 2005

Certification Classification	Access Investigator	Access Architect
Occupational Roles	<p>Independent consultant to the general public, or to a code enforcement agency.</p> <p>Employee of a code enforcement agency.</p> <p>Employee responsible for managing accessibility to employer's facilities.</p>	<p>Architect-of-record for a construction project.</p> <p>Staff architect in a design firm, responsible for access compliance of assigned construction projects.</p>
Design Services	May identify design resources and offer general design services, as limited by the Architect's Practice Act.	Professionally accountable for the design of accessibility, as the project architect.
Core Knowledge Base of the Discipline	Prescriptive Requirements of Accessibility Codes and Standards	Prescriptive Requirements of Accessibility Codes and Standards
	Project Scoping and Accessibility Design Awareness	Project Scoping and Accessibility Design Awareness
Knowledge of Professional Practice Standards	Field Investigations and Accessibility Reports	Field Investigations and Accessibility Reports
	Plan Review of Accessibility in Construction Documents	Design and Drafting of Accessible Features in Construction Documents
		Establishing Hardship Claims and Designing for Equivalent Facilitation.
		Legal Performance Obligations to Design for Accessibility
		Applied Principles of Universal Design

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Qualification Requirements of Candidates for Certification
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Certification Classification	Access Investigator	Access Architect
Professional Duties	<p>Conducts facility surveys to assess compliance with accessibility codes and standards;</p> <p>Prepares accessibility reports concerning removal of barriers at public accommodations;</p> <p>Reviews construction documents to evaluate the compliance of proposed work with accessibility codes and standards; and</p> <p>Verifies the compliance of recently-completed construction with accessibility codes and standards.</p>	<p>Directs the design and drafting of accessible features in construction documents;</p> <p>Resolves design issues that are not clearly prescribed in accessibility codes and standards; and</p> <p>Advocates policies which satisfy the legal obligation to provide nondiscriminatory opportunities to participate and enjoy the benefits offered by a public facility.</p>
Design Services	May identify design resources and offer general design services, as limited by the Architect's Practice Act.	Professionally accountable for the design of accessibility, as the project architect.
Criminal Record History Check	Possess the strength of character required of a trusted professional involved in the care and security of persons at risk.	Possess the strength of character required of a trusted professional involved in the care and security of persons at risk.
Experience Qualification	Two years of employment for a code enforcement agency, a consulting service primarily involved in access compliance, or for a licensed architect, engineer or contractor.	Currently licensed to practice architecture in California.
Educational Qualification	<p>One year of college coursework in construction technology or a related field.</p> <p>or</p> <p>High school diploma, plus two additional years of eligible experience beyond the experience qualification.</p>	As required for licensing as an architect in California.
Disabilities Awareness Seminar	Participation in Seminar on Understanding the Impacts of Disabling Conditions on Daily Life.	Participation in Seminar on Understanding the Impacts of Disabling Conditions on Daily Life.